

April-May 1993

# The Naval Aviation Safety R



# From the Commander:



## COMMANDER NAVAL SAFETY CENTER



While on a cross-country, a pilot took off into a forecast snow storm. The aircraft disappeared from radar contact at 19,000 feet. Searchers found the wreckage on the side of a mountain, eight miles from the airport. Crash evidence showed that the aircraft was fully operational. In fact, the position of the controls at impact suggest that the pilot tried to pull up just prior to crashing. He didn't try to eject.

The investigation revealed that the pilot had not received a weather brief. He apparently flew into unexpected IMC and icing. After a max-performance takeoff, he may have experienced spatial disorientation or vertigo. By the time he recognized he was in out-of-control flight it was too late.

Those are the facts of the mishap. The story gets uglier when the pilot's myriad personal problems are introduced. Many people had bits of the story; no one had them all.

Human factors are difficult to measure and even tougher to apply to individuals. What incapacitates one person may only inconvenience another. How do you know when someone is under too much stress? When would you be willing to go to your skipper and say someone you know shouldn't fly?

This mishap was the result of a misused, not a failed, safety program. Although there were many indications that this aviator would be involved in a Class A mishap, the many parts of the picture did not come together until after the fact.

The pilot had a history of flying problems, some documented, others not. He also had major personal problems.

After the mishap, several people said they regretted not saying something sooner.

Any one of this pilot's problems could have been enough to at least temporarily ground this aviator. The combination of two or more should have set off alarms. Why wasn't important information documented or passed on to people who should know? Why were so many people willing to overlook (or rationalize) this aviator's behavior, discipline and judgment problems?

Our system has many avenues to adequately detect and handle high-risk aviators. They will only work if they are used. Putting a comrade on report is tough, but going to his funeral is tougher.

*"Guido"*

A. A. GRANUZZO  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy

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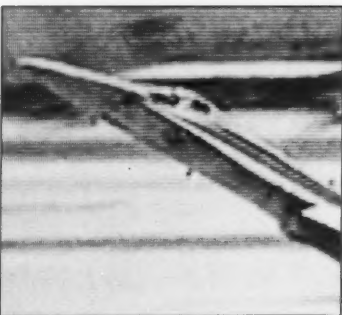
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PHAN Sean D. Flynn

# Feet Vertical Separation ZERO



OS2 John Bouvia



**A**s a newly-winged pilot in the P-3 FRS, I was looking forward to another bounce flight in the local area. My FAM partner and I had fallen way behind our class in the flight phase because of a string of bad luck with aircraft and weather. We were both looking forward to getting "back in the saddle" and getting the "X." The hop was going to be straight-forward pattern work with our on-wing.

The weather was still not good enough for the VFR pattern, so we picked up a clearance for multiple IFR approaches. We decided to remain in the GCA pattern until the weather lifted. Before long, we had all four turning and were on our way.

It did not take long to get back in the groove. After several approaches, I was starting to feel comfortable. That fat, dumb and happy feeling should have made me say, "Something is about to happen."

As we came in on final to runway 9, we were cleared for the touch-and-go, and given climbout instructions toward the south. Approaching the field, we noticed an H-3 departing on a parallel taxiway heading east. At first glance, I did not think the traffic was going to be a problem. He was going to be out of our way in no time.

After executing a missed approach (for training purposes), we climbed on runway heading and called Departure. As the controller passed us a heading to the south, I started to roll the aircraft into a right turn. The IP in the right seat was quick to point out that we still had a helo at our two o'clock. My bust, I did not have the copilot clear me on the right side, but we were under radar control, right? Wrong. We were still VMC at that point and saw the traffic. My IP reported the H-3 to Departure and asked if they held the traffic. The controller replied that he did have the traffic and told us to turn at pilot's discretion and retain aircraft separation.

Passing 1,000 feet, we began to lose sight of

the H-3 because of marginal VMC conditions. We told Departure about our conditions and they passed us a new heading toward the southwest. After discussing this with the IP, we both assumed that the new heading had to bring us behind the H-3. The controller said he was holding the traffic, so he wouldn't turn us into him, right? As I rolled out on heading, I worked to nail airspeed and altitude, and keep up a good outside scan. From the right seat came a high-pitched "I've got it!". I felt the power chop and the nose drop. I started to read off altitude as we left 1,600 feet. We came out of the clouds at about 1,000 feet and recovered at 800 feet. Once we had settled and exchanged a couple of words with the controllers, I found that, just as I expected, we had had a close call with the H-3.

A review of the tapes showed two "blips" becoming one at 1,600 feet. Seconds later, one of the blips exited at 800 feet. When we first saw the H-3, there were 200 feet horizontal and 0 feet vertical separation with the H-3 rapidly closing. After the underrun the separation was 0 feet horizontal and less than 100 feet vertical. Even more sobering were the CO's comments on the hazard report: "Only a good cockpit lookout technique and a fortunate break in the clouds prevented this from being a fatal meeting between two flight crews."

Just like aviators, controllers are human and subject to error. Unfortunately, their errors can be paid for with our lives. We cannot afford to be comfortable in the belief that ATC will always keep aircraft separated. Never assume. If something does not seem right, question it. Lastly, there is no substitute for a good outside scan. ◀

*Lt. Hendrickson flies with VP-5.*

*The controllers in this story were suspended and required to take 30 hours of training. They were then evaluated by their branch chief for requalification. ATC takes its responsibilities seriously. If you have a problem, write a hazard report. Action will be taken.—Ed.*



# The Most Instructive Flight

By Lt. Greg Robinson

**T**he flight from Texas was perfect. By the time we parked our T-2 I felt like a budding pro, and looked forward to seeing my family for the first time since starting jet training.

Trouble began two days later when I met my IP at base ops. He still had his rental car. Could I return it for him?

"I'll do the flight plan," he said.

I grabbed RAMEN 1—the SID—and skimmed it while I chatted with my dad as we drove back from the rental agency. Considering our Buckeye's single TACAN and UHF, RAMEN 1 looked formidable: runway heading north to 1,500 feet, establish outbound radial to 4 DME from the station TACAN, then contact departure during a

climbing right 150-degree turn to 5,000 feet, intercepting an outbound radial off a different TACAN.

My IP was waiting in the rear cockpit when I returned. "Get in," he said. "I've already got our clearance."

I threw on my flight gear and climbed in, unpinning my seat as the canopy dropped. The engines started as I skimmed the SID, strapped on my knee board and plugged into the ICS. I scribbled furiously as he quickly read our revised clearance during the short taxi to the active runway.

In less than five minutes, I had gone from laughing with my family to taxiing for takeoff. I wanted a moment to mentally change gears, but I didn't want to disillusion my IP; he seemed to have faith in me.

"Okay, takeoff checklist reviewed, complete, let's go!" the IP said as he turned down the runway. "You have the controls."

The 4 DME from the mid-field TACAN came quickly.

Tower called, "Charlie 123, climb and maintain 3,000, switch Departure."

With full power, I rolled into RAMEN 1's climbing right turn. Things got very busy. We went IFR at 2,000 feet as I dialed Departure into the UHF.

"Departure, Charlie 123 passing 2,200 for 3,000, RAMEN 1."



Silence. I checked the frequency and tried again.

"Charlie 123, Departure, radar contact, squawk 2468." I throttled back and trimmed to prepare to level off at 3,000 feet. I changed squawks and consulted RAMEN 1 for the new TACAN channel.

"Charlie 123, climb and maintain 5,000." I didn't seem to have enough hands and eyeballs to fly, trim, talk, write, read the SID, and twist radio knobs.

I replied, "Five thousand for 123," adding power.

As I started dialing the new TACAN channel, Center came back.

"Charlie 123, cancel climb, remain at 3,000."

"Three thousand for 123," I answered, pulling power and retrimming for a level turn. I forgot the TACAN channel and looked it up again. By the time I'd dialed it, I'd passed my final heading and so rolled left, glancing at RAMEN 1 to confirm the proper heading. Rolling wings level, I checked RAMEN 1 again to see which TACAN radial I was supposed to intercept. I didn't recognize my vertigo until the cockpit was suddenly flooded with sunlight.

We burst from the clouds at 3,600 feet, climbing at 3,000 fpm, I hadn't properly trimmed out of the turn. I pulled power to idle and pushed the nose over as the IP called for the controls. We peaked at about 4,000 feet before plunging back to our assigned altitude.

Center soon called. "Charlie 123, I told you to stay at 3,000 because of that DC-9 you may have noticed a mile-and-a-half off your nose, descending into the International Airport. I have a number for you to call when you reach your destination. Advise when ready to copy."

Copying that number gave me the second worst feeling I had all day.

That flight was the last time I was a timid copilot, and the day I learned the importance of the preflight ritual. I'd done no flight planning, no aircraft preflight. I'd entered the cockpit a disorganized copilot. I hadn't even started the engines, listened to ATIS or called for clearance. Even though the IP had done all these things, I wasn't ready to fly. Rather than ask for a moment to catch up, I silently floundered.

If I'd studied RAMEN 1 on the ground, I wouldn't have been reading a SID in the air instead of flying the plane. And if I'd insisted on proper checklist procedures, I would have avoided the worst feeling I had that day: As we pushed negative Gs arcing down to altitude, I floated up past the ejection seat handle. In my haste, I'd forgotten to strap in.

Lt. Robinson flies C-12s from NAS Glenview, and is awaiting orders to A-6s.

# No-Grade Copilot

By Lt. Kevin C. Jones

**H**ow many pilots does it take to bring aboard a Hawkeye at night, anyway? During two back-to-back right-seat hops, my “nuggetness” and character underwent a little refinement early on in the cruise.

The aircraft commander was a first-tour lieutenant, who had less than half a cruise but some 100 Hawkeye traps. It had been my impression in flying with this guy that the best thing I could do was shut up and not say anything to embarrass myself—no jokes, no games, and certainly no help, unless, perhaps, he asked for it. After all, he was in charge. As usual, the AEW portion of the flight was successful and uneventful, but our night’s excitement was still ahead.

The CV was now clearly in view. We reviewed checklists. The pass that followed made midrats a little more difficult to swallow: settle in the middle, not enough power on the come-on in close, low, flat, drift left at the ramp to a no-grade 3-wire. It became clear to me that my scan was moving slower than his during the approach. Some back-up.

In the debrief, the pilot said, “If I drifted that far left at the ramp, why didn’t you say anything to me?” My excuses ranged from “I didn’t see it” to “You didn’t brief me on what you wanted me to do.” He continued to express his feelings on the no-grade and my lack of support.

“Good learning experience,” I thought. “I’ll never do that again.” Famous last words.

My next shining copilot hop was with a very senior pilot, who had more than five cruises, 5,000 flight hours, and more than 500 traps in type. What could go wrong here? As a top air-wing performer, he would surely walk away with another solid night pass.

Unlike the previous night, he briefed me in marshal on exactly what he wanted me to do: carefully watch line-up, give him little “sugar” calls (like all good LSOs do)



when needed, and call out any deviations that required his attention.

“No problem,” I thought. “At least I know what he wants.” I felt myself slip into a state of calm as we approached another night landing. Ho hum.

As we went dirty, the pilot wrestled with AOA and airspeed. Remembering that maintenance had changed the AOA probe just before launch, we discussed possible AOA discrepancies. While fighting to keep on-speed, the





Lt Mike Harrison

pilot was everywhere but on-and-on during the ACLS approach. "Surely he can see that he is off," I thought. "After all, everyone can read and fly needles." But the deviations continued, and every time I was about ready to jump in and say something, CATCC came up to tell us we were deviating from glideslope or azimuth. By then, it was too late. On the ball, we went from clara high to clara low, chasing a definitely bad AOA gauge. Again, I was certain he could see that he was off. After all, everyone

can fly the ball. I was no help at all, afraid of either embarrassing him by saying something, or thinking that he was in the process of fixing the problem.

Finally, I jumped in and called, "Clara," as our E-2 went high in close.

The LSOs responded in kind. "Waveoff."

The pilot had flown a pretty ugly pass, battling snakes all the way while focusing too much on the AOA problem. Part of the problem was in the right seat. I didn't do those things he had briefed me to do. While going around the pattern, he reiterated what needed to be done, and mentioned what I had failed to do: no glideslope calls, no airspeed calls, no help.

We decided to call "Negative AOA" this time on the ball and get paddles on our side. I decided I was going to talk the pilot's ear off during this pass. I noted every deviation. The result? An OK 2-wire and successful crew coordination.

After the flight, we again discussed what I had and had not done, while I searched for answers. After all was said and done, I came up with these conclusions. The copilot needs to have a scan as quick and accurate as the pilot flying the aircraft. Four eyes are better than two, and the sooner deviations are noted, the sooner timely corrections can be made.

Lineup is critical for an E-2. That's no surprise, but at night, it's easier for drifts to go unnoticed, both on the ball and during the ACLS approach. In our squadron, most pilots prefer that the copilot hawk lineup.

Whether briefed or not, the copilot is there to back up the pilot during the approach. Any deviations should be brought to the pilot's attention. Don't wait to be told what to do. Be assertive in helping out. It's your pass too, with your teammate at the controls, whether you're a copilot, CICO, BN or RIO.

Don't be intimidated. In both of these flights, I felt that the experience of both pilots outweighed my ability to be a good copilot, which was wrong. Every good pilot considers his fellow crewman an asset in completing a recovery.

Being a good backup has its responsibilities. Be sure you know your job before you're at the back of the ship staring at a low ball, a left drift, or a settle-decel in close while thinking to yourself, "Surely he can see that he's off."

Lt. Jones flies E-2Cs with VAW-125. He is also an LSO.



So you're going to be an airshow pilot. Being selected to perform a dynamic flight demonstration is certainly a highlight in anyone's career. Presumably you didn't answer an ad on a matchbook cover; you were selected because of your maturity, skill and professionalism. If these are the criteria, then why do we seem to regularly have serious mishaps at airshows?



## **The Crowd Can't Tell the Difference, but Your CAG Can!**

By LCdr. Rich Karwowski  
and  
LCdr. Bob Norris

The desire to "show your stuff" in front of peers, family, friends and the general public is innate in most aviators. Yet, how often does a naval aviator have the opportunity to fly a lightly loaded, totally slick aircraft to its limits at low altitude? Limitations that we seldom consider can become critical during an airshow.

The adrenalin rush from performing in front of thousands of people must be factored into your preparations. If you cannot nail the routine during practice (without distraction), you are not ready for the pressure of a public performance. Commit yourself at the beginning to becoming your own toughest critic. Quantify each step in the routine and strive to hit all the numbers as you begin to master the maneuvers and transitions. Contrary to popular belief, this technique will not lead to a "mechanical" routine, but is the only way to assure a crisp, impressive performance.

Memorize the written routine thoroughly. Review video and HUD tapes and discuss the subtle points with an experienced demo pilot. You must be able to hit all your parameters consistently in the simulator. The lack of visual clues in the simulator will develop skill with instrument reference that will pay off on hazy-day performances.

Once you've mastered the routine, have someone give you emergencies that are time critical. Practice engine failures during slow speed flight. If you can't recover in the trainer, you probably won't be successful during the actual mission.

In-flight practice in a properly configured aircraft is essential. However, time and money can limit the number of practice hops available. Using the altitude-stepdown approach, schedule dedicated practice sessions where the minimum altitude is gradually reduced as you successfully complete the routine. Whenever possible, the practice session should be video-taped and monitored by another demo pilot in UHF-VHF communication.

A useful video tape must include the horizon for reference. Never assume you can perform a maneuver successfully at show height that you have not mastered at altitude. Anticipate altimeter lag and impressive acceleration rates. Stay well below your critical mach number or you may find yourself with a new call sign.

Become familiar with the show site using recent photographs. Develop an additional written checklist for that airshow, including baro/radar altimeter bugs, show-line orientation, reference points, and divert fields.

Intersecting runways can be disorienting during a high-speed turn. How is the density altitude going to affect your numbers? What references will you use to determine extended show line? Rising terrain can create the illusion of a false horizon. Inverted rolling transitions can be especially disorienting and make it hard to align for the next maneuver.

Schedule a practice session at the show field. At least conduct an area familiarization when you arrive.

On the day of the show, you'll really be pumped. Allow yourself plenty of time so you don't feel rushed. Visualize the entire show focusing on transition maneuvers to ensure you maintain orientation relative to the show line. The aircraft is either up or down; don't fly a cripple because you feel obligated to please the crowd. This is where your maturity will be tested. Use your checklist and fly your numbers. Do not fly below your altitude limits.

The temptation is normal, but only the front row will be able to see your last flight. Never come into the cockpit when you're nose low. Get the nose above the horizon and climbing before you troubleshoot that light in the gear handle. Remember that NATOPS limits still apply. It's very easy to exceed the G-limit for gear-transition after sustaining 7 Gs in a turn prior to your dirty pass.

That 500-knot break may be really spectacular when you discover that the G-limiter is unreliable at your fuel state. Religiously doublecheck your configuration after every change. More than one pilot has tried a dirty high-speed pass, and then had to take an unintentional trap or land gear up in front of the home-town crowd.

Many pilots have learned that maximum performance (min-roll) landings are high-risk maneuvers that most crowds will not appreciate, but that may extend your visit indefinitely.

The list of considerations is almost endless. Experienced demo pilots realize that the crowd cannot distinguish between 550 and 600 knots or between 6.5 Gs and a severe overstress, but your CAG can. Just be aware that many factors deserve your serious consideration. Those hours of preparation will pay off in a safe performance that will also please the crowd. ◀

LCdr. Karwowski flew F/A-18 demonstrations for two years and is currently assigned to VFA-303.

LCdr. Norris flew F-14 demos for two years and is the Officer-in-Charge for VFA-303.



# Be Alert!

## We Need More 'lerts!

By Cdr. D.E. Hannum



Vance Vasquez

As P-3 pilot NATOPS checks go, this day was running quite smoothly. The weather was exceptional, we launched on time, and I had two of my best flight engineers to assist with the training scenarios.

With end-of-quarter night-hour funding as tight as it was, I had planned a 4-hour ride to complete both the pilots who needed checks. That was about an hour short of what is normally required, but I had flown NATOPS checks on both pilots before and expected no problems. We completed one pilot's NATOPS check. The other pilot required only runway work, so we were just about ready to finish.

Since the field we were working at was getting busy, we returned home hoping to take advantage of our parallel runways. However, with one runway periodically closed, and arrival and departure traffic as heavy as ever, we were out of luck.

Although we managed to complete a three-engine, full-stop landing, the taxi, departure delays from ramp and taxiway construction and heavy traffic resulted in a 20-minute delay at the approach end of the runway. Once finally airborne we tried three times to make a simulated two-engine approach only to find ourselves having to break off with a four-engine go-around at various positions in the pattern.

As I look back on it, I probably should have just given up on the two-engine approach. Everything else that we had done that day was fine and there was no reason why we could not have called the check complete. I am sure the pilot at the controls (PAC) was probably just as frustrated and tired as I was. We tried once more.

During the previous attempts at the two-engine approach, after each four-engine go-around I configured the aircraft for another two-engine approach. While we retarded the power lever, trimmed up, and adjusted the pattern to meet the needs of the tower controller, the landing-gear warning system (LGWS) horn periodically sounded off with "nuisance" warnings as a function of gear, flap, airspeed and power-lever position. I know that there were several times that I would liked to have reached through that mike and strangled the tower controller for altering our pattern and having us go around as often as we did.

Evidently my frustration level was more visible than I

thought. My IFE, sensing my frustration, and seeing an opportunity to help, pulled the LGWS circuit breaker at some point in the pattern without my knowledge, effectively canceling the horn ... permanently!

On our last attempt, Tower cleared us for a full-stop from a right 180 to the left runway. It wasn't a normal pattern, but then nothing had been quite normal thus far. Off the 180 I made my normal call to Tower for clearance to land. The gear was still up since the PAC had not called, "Gear down, landing checklist" yet, and for some reason, I said, "I'll call the gear." For those of you unfamiliar with P-3 operations, it has been standard procedure for years to put the gear down at the 180, complete the checklist, then call for clearance.

Through the 135 it appeared that we were somewhat high and fast. My scan was predominately outside while I

was considering whether we would be able to touch down in the first third of the runway. We passed through the 90, still not configured to land! The LGWS circuit breaker was still out, and a small red "wheels" light was flashing, indicating that the gear were not down. Four sets of eyes in the flight station missed the "wheels" light. Two observers in the back (who can both clearly hear and sometimes, depending on flap setting, see the gear coming down) missed the fact that the gear was up as we continued our descent.

Through 500 feet AGL, the point at which our NATOPS manual says to review the landing checklist, the off-duty pilot, who had earlier completed his NATOPS check and was now behind the PAC on the radar console, simply said, "The gear is up." By the way he said it I knew he

had been well aware of our configuration on the 180 but had been reluctant to interfere with the check, assuming the senior IP in the right seat had everything under control. How wrong he was, and how grateful we were that he was so alert.

The P-3 community is no stranger to gear-up approaches and landings. They have happened before and consequently the LGWS was installed to back up the small flashing red "wheels" light with an annoying aural horn to alert the crew. We managed to defeat that system, as other military and civil aircrews have done in the past, fortunately without disastrous results.

Cdr. Hannum is the EA to the CO of VP-68.





# Where *IS* That Stuff?

By Lt. P.J. Menner

When was the last time you checked your survival equipment? The last time I forgot to check mine was during counter-narcotics operations in the Caribbean. Everything had been going well for the detachment. We were doing a lot of flying; as an H2P, I was sometimes making two flights a day. The flights were long and hot because the air conditioning was not working.

By the end of a hop, I could not wait to get out of the aircraft and quickly throw that hot SV-2 into my locker, where it would sit until the next day when I would reluctantly strap it on again. What a pain. If only it was lighter and more comfortable.

I was flying a typical mission with the OINC on our last day on station. About 80 miles from the ship the tail-rotor chip light illuminated. We went through the NATOPS procedures and turned toward the ship. The aircraft was holding together fine and there were no secondary indications to worry about. However, we still had 40 minutes to get to the ship and there was nowhere else to divert to.

Preparing for the worst-case scenario, we reviewed everyone's responsibilities in the event we had to ditch. It was then I thought about my egress from the helo and my survival gear. I reached down to turn on my helicopter

emergency egress device (HEED), something I should have done on preflight, and found that it was completely empty. Not a breath of air remained. It was full when we left five weeks ago. What happened? I reported this to the rest of the crew and asked them to check their own HEED bottles. After a long pause they replied that one was empty and another half full. I began to wonder what other survival gear didn't work.

Forty uneventful minutes later we were safely back on deck. As I was untying my bottle to get it filled I decided to check my PRC-90. I dug the radio out and turned it on. Nothing. Staring at my vest, I tried to remember where everything was. It had been too long since I went through my survival gear. Where was the mirror, or the whistle? How many pencil flares did the vest hold? Where was the strobe light? Fishing through your vest after a night ditching at sea is the wrong time to find out.

The SV-2 is your best chance for survival when everything else you depend on has failed. Knowing the location and operation of all your survival gear can be a lifesaver. I now hang the vest up with care and check it thoroughly before each flight. I know what's in my vest and its location.

Lt. Menner flies with HSL-48's Det 10.



Do **You** Know the Status of Your SV-2?



April 1993

# *another* approach

The Naval Aviation Safety Lampoon



**Giant Sparrow Attacks Plane!**

**Der flugendeck ist gefoulen!**

**Hover Checks in a P-3**

## This Is Serious, Dammit...

Ten years ago, the *Approach* staff came across a striking photo of a helicopter and decided to run it as a make-up-the-caption feature. The helo was floating in the Atlantic a hundred yards off the beach, where its crew was huddled in a classic what-do-we-do-now pose. Hundreds of humorous captions poured in; some squadrons sent in dozens. I remember "Short straw tells the XO" and "Well, here we are."

Goofy caption contests are no particular brainstorm; *Approach* did them back in the late '50s. One showed an F4D atop a huge pile of hay bales. Captions included, "Funds may be short, but this will never replace landing gear!" and "Wal, Henry, I might buy 'er, but she looks awful expensive to feed."

Our readers never got to see the new batch of comic punchlines, however. An exasperated elephant at the wing that owned the squadron that dunked the helo called our front office and let us know that he failed to see the humor of the situation. Not only was it embarrassing, someone could have gotten hurt, by golly. So we laughed at the captions and discarded them.

One thing was clear: most aviators take their humor seriously. Humor remains an inescapable part of the high-pressure, max-tension life in squadrons. In ready rooms, snide remarks of the faster-and-funnier variety are an art form. Disrespectful callsigns date back to the root of naval aviation: when Eugene Ely made the first trap

aboard USS *Pennsylvania* in 1911, the ship's skipper was Charles "Frog" Pond. Colorful jargon is another symptom. Why say "dull mission" when you can say "BOREX"?

Humor helps dilute the adrenalin. It offers a well-ordered, predictable world of craziness as an antidote to the real world, which is disordered and unpredictable. So the JOs have bug-juice tastings. When killjoy rules trickle downhill, they come from the Morale Suppression Team. The coffee mess gets some patches made that say "AOM Centurian," with the "O" as a huge yawning mouth.

Our April Fool's insert came about because we received the P-3 photo and saw the article about the giant sparrow. We spotted a humorous trend. Enthusiasm was followed by worry: Would this insert be a waste of our shrinking assets? Would it make us appear trivial and silly?

We refused to believe it. Certainly our intelligent, loyal and perceptive readers would recognize the socially redeeming value. Everyone knows that birdstrikes are serious hazards, and that (thanks to an infantile, egotistic attraction) flatthating is hardly extinct.

Like the photo of the floating helo, these articles are a sense-of-humor check. Along with gut checks and headwork checks, being able to laugh is one of those tools that helps keep you sane and alive. ◀

Derek Nelson  
Derek Nelson



# Get the Check in the Box

## An Instant Approach Story



In an effort to help you improve your squadron's safety program, relieve overworked JOs of the intense pressure to produce original safety articles, and earn your squadron more safety S points, the editors of *Approach* offer this simple form for your contributions to *Approach*. Simply check the box that you feel best applies to you, or make up your own, and voilà - ...a classic there-I-was story.

We launched into a ☐ dark and stormy ☐ bright and sunny ☐ really icky sky for a 1+45 ☐ BOREX ☐ WASEX ☐ ski trip to Aspen. Our trusty ☐ Vigilante ☐ Intruder ☐ Radio Flyer wagon was in top shape and we were ☐ well briefed ☐ ready to brief ☐ wearing briefs.

After we launched and leveled off, my ☐ pilot ☐ BN ☐ RIO ☐ TACCO ☐ ECMO ☐ significant other said, "I've got a ☐ fire light ☐ hydraulic failure ☐ box lunch." My eyeballs snapped to the instruments. After quickly reading ☐ the checklist ☐ the hydraulic gauge ☐ the menu my worst fears were confirmed. We had lost ☐ an engine ☐ hydraulics ☐ the pizza delivery number.

I called ☐ Departure ☐ my wingman ☐ my wife and ☐ declared an emergency ☐ asked for a vector ☐ said I'd be late for dinner. We weren't in real trouble unless ☐ the bypass valve ☐ our alternate field ☐ the convenience store on the corner wasn't open.

Then it happened, another ☐ master caution light ☐ fire light ☐ tequila sunrise was glaring at me. We had to ☐ land ☐ make a decision ☐ order a pizza. Just when we thought it couldn't get any worse, we flew into ☐ an unforecast thunderstorm ☐ a flock of migrating geese

☐ Peruvian airspace. The aircraft was bouncing around like ☐ a hard-tail Harley on a country road ☐ a tin can kicked by a little kid ☐ my ranking at the lieutenant murder board. As quickly as we flew into the melee, we flew out again and into ☐ the middle of a marshall stack ☐ clear sky ☐ 37 skydiving Elvises.

Then things started looking up. We had the field in sight and had ☐ covered all the contingencies ☐ the gear down and locked ☐ flipped a coin to see who would land the airplane. We contacted the tower and asked for ☐ a straight-in ☐ a fly-by ☐ a room at the Hilton. We were cleared to land as we rolled out on final with ☐ a centered ball ☐ all checklists complete ☐ our eyes closed.

With the hook down and three down-and-locked, we flew ☐ into the wire ☐ an OK 3 ☐ into the skipper's laundry line. As we were towed to our line ☐ the hydraulic gauge read zero ☐ we breathed a sigh of relief ☐ the plane captains spelled out "Welcome Home" with semaphore flags.

I learned an important lesson that day — ☐ NATOPS is written in blood ☐ complacency kills ☐ always wear clean underwear...in case you have an accident. ◀

## WAR BIRD

### *Giant sparrow attacks plane*



● AMAZING PHOTO shot by the crew of a passing airliner captured the giant sparrow's attack on the cropduster plane flown by a former military pilot

**THE PILOT of a cropdusting plane made an emergency landing after his aircraft was buzzed by a giant 200-pound sparrow!**

Gilberto Carrena, 38, was spraying wheat fields near Rosario, Argentina when the monster bird made a kamikaze nosedive right for his plane.

"I saw it out of the corner of my eye at the last second," says Gilberto. "It was a giant sparrow with his wings spread out and its mouth wide open."

"It made a loud shriek and it came right at me. He was trying to

**SUN EXCLUSIVE by KEN O'HARA**

kill me, that's for sure. Luckily, I maneuvered out of the way and went down to a lower altitude. I radioed the tower and told them there was a sparrow trying to shoot me down — and they just laughed at first. Not surprisingly they thought I was joking.

"But then the sparrow circled around and came at me again and I had to suddenly change course one more time. That's when they realized I was in danger and wasn't playing games out there."

"I told the tower I had to make an emergency landing because that

thing was flying at me." Gilberto, a former fighter pilot who saw action in Argentina's war against England for the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands in 1982, says even combat missions against the Royal Air Force didn't frighten him as much as the giant sparrow.

"You know what to expect in combat," he says. "But this was a monster bird that was out to kill me. He was on a suicide mission, like those Japanese pilots in World War II."

"I never experienced anything like that before. I thought I was going to die."

However, Gilberto safely landed

his plane in a wheat field and suffered no injuries.

His frightening encounter was later verified by incredible aerial photos taken by the crew of a commercial airliner that had also spotted the sparrow in the sky.

The Argentine Air Force was put on alert and fighter pilots made an intensive search for the attacking sparrow but failed to track the bird down.

"We didn't find anything but that doesn't mean there isn't something out there," says an Air Force official. "There were too many witnesses to this thing."

"We're going to keep looking."



# Do I Have to Spell It Out for You?

Lt. Steve Halsted

I was a Ltjg. fresh out of the FRS. The Ops O scheduled me to fly some ACM with the XO as my RIO and the CO and the MO as lead. A tense hop for a FNG. We had thoroughly briefed our SOPs and EPs according to NATOPS, but I had a funny feeling this flight was destined to become a SNAFU. Oh well — we had to get the X.

Our PC directed us toward the cat 4 JBD. I could see an H-46 in starboard delta waiting to begin the VERTREP. Maybe we'd get some pony. The XO's voice on the ICS brought me back quickly as he read off the PCL.

The WX was CAVU, which is great for EMCON launches. As long as the boat stayed on PIM, finding our way home would be easy, even without GPS. Once in the shuttle, with an OK from the backseat, I saluted. The shooter touched the deck, and we were airborne.

We boomed out to the OPAREA and started to bump heads. The skipper rolled in and immediately called, "Fox 1,2,3," with a "Guns, guns, guns!" call for good measure. I was a dead bogey before my first turn.

The XO was really PO'd. No BZs on that one. Guess I should have paid more attention to DACM during BFM training.

I quickly set up on the perch for another pass. I was determined to make better use of the HUD and my trusty TF-30s to spank the CO. I put my nose on my playmate and pulled to max AOA. The Gs came on fast and I hoped I wouldn't suffer GLOC.

As I checked six, the XO said, "I think we had a little TFOA." Sure enough, the IFR probe door was missing. We called "knock it off" and asked our wingman to check us out.

Just then, we heard a SAR call on the UHF. Apparently an S-3 doing some SSSC hadn't reported RTB. Before we could effectively berate the ASW bubbas for getting lost, things got worse for us.

First the ECS failed. Then the lights went out. (It was day so that wasn't so bad.) And of course we were NORDO. My RIO squawked 7700/7600 on the IFF, and dug out his PRC-90 so we could talk to Strike. I pulled the RAT and we got everything back.

We asked for a long straight-in and headed for the initial. The Boss asked us to delta easy while they set up



Peter Mersky

the MOVLAS and prepared a ready deck. We still had one problem: we were carrying a TARPS pod, two blivets and a TER with AIM-9s so we were charlie on the ball.

Fortunately, our bullseye was 4.0. Just to be sure, we maintained a self-controlled GCA. We were set-up on the BRC when the LSO called for us to spin it because the PLAT was down.

As we cleaned up and turned downwind we hit BINGO. I asked for pigeons to our divert and got a vector.

We climbed to FL290 and prepared to penetrate the myriad TCAs, ARSAs, ATAs surrounding our divert field. The XO got ATIS and briefed the MSA for the area. We checked in with Approach and requested a GCA. Once on the PAR I felt we would make it. There was more to come, our LOX ran out.

We pressed on, landed, and safely rolled into the A-gear. After our beleaguered 1+45 hop, maintenance A-799ed all our gripes.



# Eine Kleine Nachtflügen

**E**ine airkraftkarrier boaten ben gesteamen der ocean mit conductiche nachtflügen tactikers. Die airkrafters ben gewhooshen und geschnorten von der katapult midout gesplashen in der drink, und now is upkommen der rekoerie.

Eine, zwei, drei, down ist kommen der tailhooker birden. Whamisch! Bamisch! Danke ma'amisch! Und ist remaining in der luft but eine propellerkraten und eine jettenschnorter.

Die whooshenjetter ist maken couple schtinken passes und ist getten offgewaven mit der deck gefoulen by grossenbomber. Ist getten low der petrol in em tanken, und der piloter ist mighty anxious to get aboard, zo ist gediven for deck to gesnatchen der first wire midout obergefloaten.

Donerwetter! Der schnortenspitter gehitten em deck like sackerbricken, und der nosenwheeler ist offgebusten. Also, der nosenwheeler ist wedgen in der katapult track. Ach!

"Achtung!", ist roaren der bullhorner, "outgetten der lead von der panzers und ausmoven klunker elsewhere, schnell!"

Ist puschen und pullen der luft, der propellerkraten ist keepen up maken der passers mit waveoffs und ist

outkallen, "Hey, when ist der flugendeck ben outgenklearen?"

Der piloter ist getten nicht reply.

Ist getten lower und lower der petrol in em tanken, und ist kommenzen der piloter to get shoooken.

"When ist ready das bucket der bolters for der landisch?" ist gekallen. Und der birdenbarger ist finnaly upkommen an der radiosquakker, "Konserven der oktaners, bitte."

Ist der piloter konserven der oktaners mit der powersetten? Nein! Ist grinden around der pattern like gotten oktaners up der grometter. Soon der petrol ist so low der piloter ist gershouten, "Maytag, Maytag, ich bist maken der ditchensplasher besiden der ship!" Und so he does, just as der flugendeck ist ungefoulen.

Ist plenty wet und geschnorten der piloter, und ist schnarling der harsh komment about der incident. "Eine krock," der piloter ist gesayen.

Die flugendecker folken ben alzo unhappy mit der outchewen by der airbosser, und der airbosser ist getten grosser outchewen von der kapitan. All ist screamish at der odder und sayen if der klunkenheader piloter ben konserven der oktaners like he ben tolden, ist have enough for eine more passer. Der staffelskipper und der airgruppenkommander ist growlen und komplainen der karrier folken ist not knowen der tasks from der hole inem round down. All ist unhappy.

Himmel! Ist das nicht eine grosse kalamatie? Und who ist der bag geholden? Meinselb am thinken der whole thing gesmellen like der olden fable where der folken ben so busy mit overputten der blamisch elsenwheren, ist over looken der real kausers. Ist smartisch? Nein, ist nicht!

Ist better der honeybarger folken und der ironbirden pilots offknocken der squabblers und der nitpikken und make mit der proper doktriner und prozeiduren, den we gotten der programmer gelokken, no? ◀

In 1957 Ltjg. Roger G. Smith ditched alongside *Saratoga*. During the ensuing investigation, ship's officers contended the pilot should have orbited at a lower power setting.

Smith's response was "More foresight by competent authority in the air department in planning the launches and recoveries would prevent accidents of this nature." He also wrote "Eine Kliene Nachtflügen" which instantly circulated throughout the ship. It was first published in April 1958 in *Approach*.

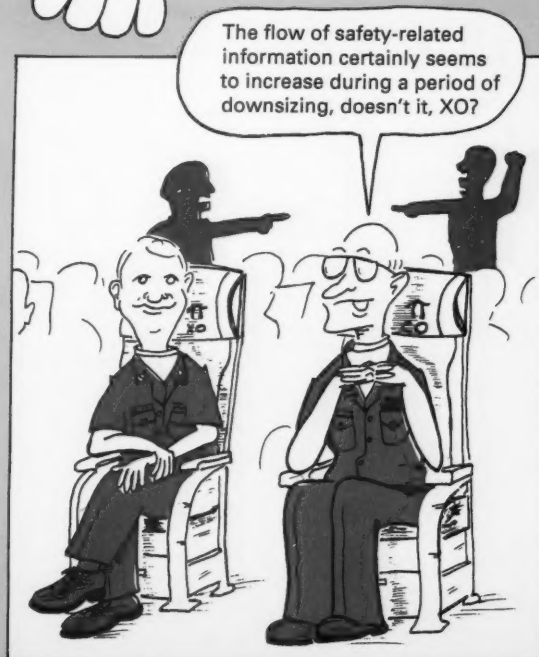
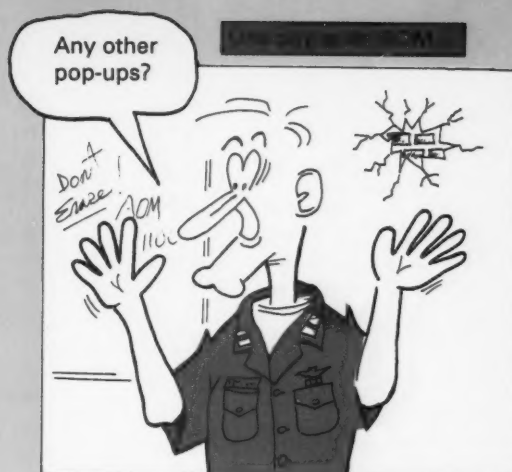
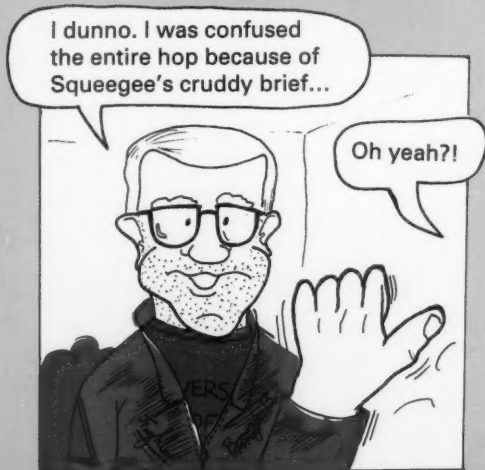
When his story was reprinted in *The Hook* in 1989, Smith said, "I saw no combat, won no medals and left the Navy with what was possibly one all-time bad fitness report after an admiral endorsed my accident to say my flying skills were good but my attitude was reprehensible."



# BROWNSHOES IN ACTION COMIX

"The kind real aviators like"

By LCdr. Ward Carroll, VF-101



Although some, if not all aviators,  
have experienced vertigo while flying  
IMC...few have experienced it in VMC.

## VMC Vertigo



By Lt. William R. Noelker

Lt. Noelker flies F/A-18s with VFA-81.

I had recently completed my second deployment with my first-tour squadron. Confident in my abilities, I was looking forward to one of a number of DACT hops that we had scheduled with our Air Force counterparts.

I launched as flight lead of a two-ship on a 2 v 2 with the Eagles. After flying to the op area, we set up for our G warmup and weapons checks. After half a turn and with the jet under 2-3 Gs, I felt a mild tumbling, spinning sensation. I had never felt anything like it before, so I dismissed it as mild GLOC. I checked my G-suit as we reversed our turn and I again loaded up the jet, this time to 5 Gs. Once again, the strange sensation occurred. Being so mild and apparently not hindering my abilities, I again chalked it up as GLOC and told myself that I was going to have to strain harder.

Time to fight! After a normal intercept and tally 2, I engaged. Within 1-2 seconds, in a 7.5-G max-performance turn, I became completely incapacitated. This was not GLOC! I experienced a tumbling, spinning sensation so severe that I could not control the aircraft. Knowing that I had enough altitude, I let go of the controls. With a quick knock-it-off call, I waited for the sensation to subside. After 20 seconds, which seemed like an eternity, I slowly began to recover some perception and I could once again make out the horizon.

The jet was in a shallow bank and descent, and I immediately leveled the wings. It took another 20-30 seconds before the feeling completely disappeared. RTB was normal with an uneventful straight-in.

The next morning, an appointment with the flight surgeon revealed a viral inner-ear infection. Before the flight I had no indications of anything abnormal and I felt 100 percent. After a few days rest to let the virus run its course, I was back in the cockpit and fighting once again.

You should do G warmups before any tactical maneuvers, especially at low altitude. At 500 feet AGL, a pilot does not have 20 or 30 seconds to spare. If incapacitated, he must act immediately. Depending on the level of incapacitation you may have only two choices, eject or die! When was the last time you briefed G warmups on a tactical low level or a standard Mk-76 bombing hop? Do you have 20 seconds if you are inverted pulling through the top of a 30-30 pop at 1,200 feet?

Every year we lose good aircrew to unknown circumstances. Some of those could certainly have been prevented. My circumstances were unusual. If I had been any lower it might well have ended up as a Class A.

Lt. Noelker flies F/A-18s with VFA-81.

*Lt. Noelker is right. He didn't have GLOC. Instead, he developed G-induced vertigo caused by G-stress coupled with viral inner-ear inflammation which sensitizes the semicircular canals, and some head movement, which generated a spinning or tumbling sensation.*

*When G-induced vertigo occurs, knock it off, and don't push it. Keep your head as still as possible. Keep the aircraft straight and level until the feeling goes away. Then RTB and check with your flight surgeon. — Cdr. Charles Barker, MC, FSR Analysis Branch Head, Naval Safety Center.*



# Training:

**It's Not Just for Nuggets**

By Cdr. Richard Shipman



**E**xperience in naval aviation is invaluable. Hours in the logbook, traps at the ship and years in the community all add up to a priceless safety net. Unfortunately, as the logbook thickens and the hairline thins, it is easy to believe that experience can substitute for continued training. In reality, training never ends. Nor should it, because when training falls short, mishaps happen, even if the pilots are highly experienced.

A senior F/A-18 pilot discovered this the hard way. This commanding officer decided to fly an air show in place of the designated air-show pilots, both of whom were away on detachment. The pilot had received verbal authorization to fly an air show seven months before the mishap, but he was not an officially designated air-show pilot, nor did he regularly practice the air-show profiles.

The maneuver that resulted in the crash was a modified loop designed to highlight the pitch capability of the F/A-18. The mishap pilot had been unable to practice this maneuver because of overcast conditions at the field the entire week before the air show. Therefore, he had modified the routine to include a slicing, descending turn from a lower peak altitude. Witnesses reported that he had struggled through this maneuver during a practice session two days before the air show, pulling out well below the mandated 500-foot AGL minimum altitude.

On the day of the air show, the pilot started the maneuver lower and slower than prescribed. He was also somewhat late lighting the afterburner. As a result, the Hornet topped out at only 2,180 feet, at an airspeed less than 100 knots. The aircraft floated over on its back into a near vertical, unrecoverable nose-low attitude. The F/A-18 struck the ground in an extremely nose-high attitude as the pilot tried in vain to pull out. The crash destroyed the Hornet, and the pilot was seriously injured.

The high-speed and low-altitude maneuvers flown in any air show are not part of a squadron's regular training program. Consequently, squadrons must approach these performances with caution and planning. Most type commanders have set up specific procedures for air shows. Pilots must meet high standards, be officially designated and must regularly practice the air-show maneuvers. When this training is cut short, disasters like the F/A-18 mishap can occur. The pilot probably felt that his experience would compensate for his lack of training. Reality showed otherwise.

Another mishap offers more evidence about the dangers of trying to substitute experience and total time for training and proficiency. This mishap occurred during the first spin-training flight in the T-34C familiarization training syllabus.

The student began the maneuver satisfactorily, but failed to hold pro-spin controls as the aircraft entered the stall buffet. As a result, the aircraft fell off into a steep descending spiral instead of entering a fully developed spin.

The instructor pilot (IP) failed to identify the maneuver as a spiral. He began spin recovery procedures by pushing forward on the stick and adding full power. This only aggravated the spiral and increased the aircraft's airspeed. The T-34C accelerated well above its maximum authorized airspeed. In an attempt to pull out of the dive, the pilot on the controls overstressed the aircraft, causing one of the wings to break off of the aircraft.

The aircraft mishap board (AMB) found nothing wrong with the aircraft or engine. They concluded that the aircrew used improper procedures while monitoring the spin, misdiagnosed their condition as a spin instead of a spiral and applied anti-spin controls that aggravated the spiral. Then they lost situational awareness during the

subsequent out-of-control dive and overstressed the aircraft.

The IP was the squadron commanding officer. He had all the required qualifications for the flight, but he flew much less than the average instructor. In the opinion of other pilots in the squadron, he was not highly proficient. This was not because of lack of skill or motivation, but rather because of the administrative demands on his time.

The AMB noted that most officers who complete the flight-instructor training program are not burdened initially with heavy administrative duties; they can build an experience base in their instructional duties. This pilot did not have this opportunity since he came aboard as the XO.

In subsequent months, the pilot's duties as XO and later CO prevented him from flying as much or as regularly as he should have (and no doubt would have liked). He had flown only 53.6 hours of familiarization training flights in the past 365 days compared to squadron average of 160. He had logged only four spins in the last 30 days, six in the preceding six months and only 19 in the 18 months preceding the mishap.

...the dangers  
of trying to  
substitute  
experience  
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and proficiency.



Post-mishap analysis identified some other training deficiencies that played a role in the mishap, but the IP's lack of proficiency was a central issue. Could it be that the IP's considerable experience and position as CO gave him a false sense of currency and proficiency?

A final example involved a veteran light-attack pilot. This highly experienced A-7 pilot had been selected to command an F/A-18 squadron. He was going through the F/A-18 FRS and was on his initial F/A-18 CQ. During his first catapult shot, the pilot thought he heard a pop. He then perceived that the aircraft was settling off the bow. He lit the afterburners, but shortly thereafter ejected. The aircraft continued to fly for another 40 seconds before crashing into the water.

The engineering investigation found no problem with the engines or airframe of the mishap aircraft.

The pilot had more than 4,000 flight hours and 500 carrier landings. Despite this impressive background, he was not adequately prepared for his first catapult shot in the Hornet. He had many hours of A-7 time, but cat shots in the Hornet require techniques that are different from the Corsair. The F/A-18 NATOPS manual says that the aircraft is designed for a "hands off" cat shot. It cautions that pilot-induced oscillations can occur immediately after launch if the control stick is restrained during launch or if control inputs are made immediately following launch. Video tapes of the launch revealed large stabilator deflections in the mishap aircraft shortly before the pilot ejected.

The Hornet does not have a reputation as a particularly difficult aircraft off the catapult, yet obviously there are procedures a pilot has to know to launch successfully. Somewhere, this pilot's training fell short. Did instructors in the FRS brief this pilot less thoroughly because of his extensive experience in naval aviation? Were shortcuts taken in deference to his rank and position? Were assumptions made based on the pilot's outstanding reputation?

Regardless of a pilot's rank, experience or position, there are times when he will need training. It could be formal training, such as transitioning to a new aircraft in the fleet replacement squadron. It could be less formal training in preparation for a new mission. Or it could be routine training to maintain currency and proficiency. Certainly we must respect a pilot's position and give him credit for hard-won experience. But the need for training does not stop simply because a pilot reaches a certain rank

or a particular flight-time milestone.

Interestingly, a Naval Safety Center study\* revealed that hours in model were more significant than total time in determining accident probability. In fact, fighter and attack pilots with more than 2,000 total hours but less than 500 hours in model experienced more mishaps than any group but one (those pilots with less than 750 hours total time and 500 hours in model).

What can be done? First, in a formal training situation, instructors must focus on the individual's needs. Those needs will certainly vary with each pilot, but the driving force should be what the pilot's current training needs are, rather than his rank, what he has done in the

past or what training other pilots in his grade have received. One of the recommendations to come out of the Naval Safety Center study was "equal attention must be paid to the more experienced pilot who is transitioning to a new aircraft or returning to flying after a long absence from the cockpit."

Next, we need to review senior aviators' workload. Additional paperwork seems to be an inevitable by-product of promotion. Sometimes it's just not possible to stay current, proficient and safe in every squadron mission, all the time. Sometimes, it's necessary to decide whether paper-

work or flight proficiency is the priority for senior aviators.

Ultimately, though, the senior pilot has the biggest responsibility for his own training, proficiency and currency. The senior pilot must hold himself to the same standards that he sets for his juniors. If he establishes a qualification level for air shows, he must meet those qualifications if he is going to fly the show. If he is not up to speed on a certain mission, he must take himself off the flight schedule until he can safely fly it. If he is transitioning to a new aircraft, he must be just as knowledgeable and proficient as the other graduates.

Experience goes a long way in naval aviation, but it should not be used to shortcut established training programs or as a justification for bypassing existing policies. The truly professional pilot realizes that the demands of naval aviation never allow him to stop training. ◀

Cdr. Shipman is a former *Approach* editor. He flew A-7s and A-4s in the fleet.

\**Flight Experience and the Likelihood of U.S. Navy Aircraft Mishaps*, by Capt. D.W. Yacavone, Dr. M.S. Borowsky, Cdr. R. Bason and Dr. R.A. Alkov.

**Regardless  
of a pilot's rank,  
experience or  
position, there  
are times when  
he will need  
training.**

By LCdr. Karl Kolesnikoff

Ten Feet and

# climbing



**W**e were nine days into our long cruise on board a fast frigate and one day from in-chopping to the Mediterranean. We had completed our workups for two weeks, and had integrated well with the ship's company. It was my first long deployment, and I was excited about flying the SH-2F at sea. I was also looking forward to honing the skills I had developed as the squadron's tactical instructor and to training our pilots on what was then the new ASN-123 TACNAV system. The only drawback with having this experience, and being the only H2P on the detachment, was that it kept me in the left seat managing tactics.

On the night of the ninth day, the ship's sonar crew found a foreign submarine, and the battle-force commander ordered us to launch our LAMPS helicopter. The preflight and brief were quick but thorough. There was only one change from previous flights: I would fly in the right seat instead of the left.

The det OINC and I were the night crew. The launch sequence went smoothly, except we left the deck without completing the initialization of the TACNAV computer. The HAC was slow and needed prompting on which buttons to press on the TACNAV panel.

After we had reached safe single-engine airspeed and were established in our climb to altitude, we made a critical mistake: we had forgotten to do the after take-off checklist. The landing gear remained down, thereby disabling the audio portion of the altitude warning system. We even missed the down-and-locked indication in the cockpit. To say the least, we were both slow to recall the responsibilities required of our unfamiliar cockpit positions. I had spent too much time in the left seat running the TACNAV, and he had not spent enough.

Throughout the first part of the flight, both of us were in the catch-up mode. We eventually finished the tactical initialization, marked on top of the ship, and stabilized the tactical picture. Once our ops-normal report was complete, we headed outbound.

While en route to our datum, the HAC continued to ask questions about the function keys and which key would produce the proper tactical picture. I was more than willing to help him because I was more accustomed to sitting in the left seat. Unfortunately, I started paying greater attention to the TACNAV display than to flying the helicopter.

About five miles from datum, the OINC's skills were improving and his speed on the TACNAV panel was increasing. Conversation in the cockpit was slowing down, and I was almost back to fully concentrating on

flying. At that moment the crewman, who had been silent throughout my training lesson, sang out in a few octaves higher than normal about our low altitude.

The HAC quickly responded to the call and pulled on the collective. Amazingly, he reported in a calm voice, "Ten feet and climbing." I couldn't believe it. By the time I could respond, we were at 100 feet and climbing. I was mortified by what I had let happen, but I returned to flying the aircraft the way I should have been—straight and level at 400 feet, toward datum. For a brief time the banter over the ICS was gone. The HAC sat in his seat and shouted expletives over the roar of the engines to calm himself. If there had been a rock to crawl under, I would have been there.

The HAC regained his composure faster than I did, and he focused his attention on the mission. We completed the forgotten after-takeoff checklist, retracted the main landing gear, streamed the MAD bird, forced ourselves to forget the near-disaster and fly the mission. We deployed our buoy pattern, gained contact, and turned the contact over to an S-3 from the carrier when it was time to check off-station.

The HAC had changed the normal cockpit routine and was not as experienced with the TACNAV system as he needed to be for an important ASW mission. I was not as experienced as I should have been with flying from the right seat. I had neglected to do the post-takeoff checklist, which let me forget to raise the landing gear.

These factors started a chain of events that almost let us fly into the water. With the landing gear down, the aural portion of the radar altimeter warning system was disabled. The only cockpit indication was a flashing red peanut-light on the right side of the cockpit, which I missed because I was looking at the TACNAV screen.

The memory of that night still lingers. However, it's not nearly as important as what happened after the flight. The OINC gathered all the pilots and aircrewmembers together to discuss, in detail, what happened. He took a professionally embarrassing situation and made it into a learning experience for the det pilots and aircrew. He decided not to hide the mistakes we made and took responsibility for the conduct of the flight. This set the tone about how he wanted the HACs to conduct themselves for the remainder of the deployment.

His leadership improved crew coordination, opened a channel for discussion on cockpit procedures, and established an atmosphere that helped fix problems inside and outside the cockpit.

LCdr. Kolesnikoff is currently serving as HSL-34's Maintenance Officer.

# BRAVO ZULU



Left to right: Lt. Gerald Ray, Lt. Leo Kiernan

Lt. Leo M. Kiernan  
Lt. Gerald L. Ray  
VA-95

Lizard 504 entered the break at the local OLF for night FCLPs. Lt. Kiernan (pilot) dropped the gear, slats, and flaps as he and Lt. Ray (BN) completed the landing checklist.

As they turned off the 180, the crew again confirmed the aircraft configuration. Passing the 45, at approximately 500 feet AGL, they felt the aircraft settle slightly. Lt. Kiernan checked the AOA, which was good at 22 units, and Lt. Ray reported both airspeed and instantaneous vertical speed were good. Suddenly, the A-6 pitched up and rolled to the right as the AOA pegged at 30 units.

The pilot immediately applied military power and retracted the speedbrakes as the Intruder violently reversed its roll to the left. Lt. Ray rechecked the wing configurations and reported that the slats had retracted while the flaps remained down. He then called altitudes, airspeed and vertical speed. Lt. Kiernan leveled the wings with the rudder. He recovered from the approach-turn stall at about 200 feet AGL over a

housing development.

After departing the pattern and climbing to a safe altitude, the crew followed NATOPS, lowered the slats electrically and made an uneventful recovery.

Inspection revealed that the hydraulic slat brake had failed, allowing the airstream to push the slats up. A-6 NATOPS warns that in the flaps-down/slats-up configuration, severe pitch-up and stall will occur at 20-22 units AOA.

Lt. Scott Handler  
2ndLt. Brian Thompson, USMC  
VT-27

Lt. Handler (IP) and 2ndLt. Thompson (SNA) were conducting a night fam at Corpus Christi International. After finishing their landing-pattern work, they departed the field, climbing to the east. Passing 1,000 feet at 170 knots, the T-34C was struck by a large bird. Lt. Handler in the rear cockpit heard and felt "a loud explosion, accompanied by a large rush of air, flying plexiglass, blood and feathers." He immediately took control and

turned back to the airport.

The bird destroyed the front windscreen, striking 2ndLt. Thompson (who was in the front cockpit) in the face, dazing the SNA. When he regained his senses, his first instinct was to continue flying the aircraft until he realized that his IP had the controls.

Lt. Handler determined that his student was OK, and although 2ndLt. Thompson's microphone was damaged, he was still able to hear through the ICS. He indicated to his IP that he was all right by a thumbs-up and turned on the landing lights before landing.

Lt. Handler made a no-flap landing and taxied clear of the runway. He then made an emergency engine shutdown.

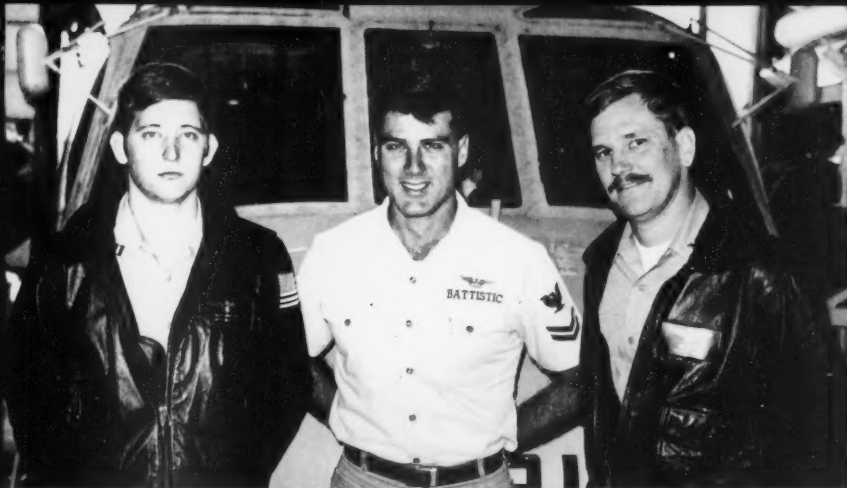
Both aviators were taken to Corpus Christi Naval Hospital, where 2ndLt. Thompson was treated for a cut lip and a chipped tooth.

Visors down, proper emergency procedures and solid aircrew coordination prevented this birdstrike from developing into something more serious.



Left to right: 2ndLt. Brian Thompson, USMC; Lt. Scott Handler





Left to right: Lt. Mike Pampalone, AW2 Robert Battistic, LCdr. Dirk Lentz

**LCdr. Dirk Lentz  
Lt. Mike Pampalone  
AW2 Robert Battistic  
HSL-42**

After a 3.5-hour night SSC mission in the Gulf of Oman, Proud Warrior 431 headed inbound to USS *Taylor* (FFG 50) for a hot-pump and crew swap. Lt. Pampalone (H2P) had just completed landing checks when he noticed that the caution light for the No.2 hydraulic reservoir had come on, followed by the caution lights for AFCS degraded, SAS and Boost-Off.

LCdr. Lentz (HAC), at the controls, confirmed that he had lost boost pressure to the collective and pedals. Lt. Pampalone consulted NATOPS for procedures for pilot-assist servo leak.

The SH-60B's hydraulic-leak isolation and detection system had automatically secured the servos for the pilot-assist and boost systems in an effort to isolate the leak.

NATOPS does not recommend a boost-off landing to a single-spot, air-capable ship, especially at night because of the great risk of dynamic rollover. However, low fuel and a lack of a larger deck made the frigate the only option. While LCdr. Lentz briefed the crew on boost-off landing to a small deck, Lt. Pampalone monitored the caution panel, anticipating a complete loss of the No.2 system. The crew reviewed the PCL for procedures for a boost-off landing.

With eight miles to go, the ship set

emergency flight quarters and LCdr. Lentz requested a green deck for a boost-off RAST-assisted recovery. Lt. Pampalone asked for 30-degree port winds at 15 knots. Taylor complied.

When the Seahawk arrived over the deck edge, Lt. Pampalone guided his HAC over the trap while AW2 Battistic lowered the aircraft messenger cable. As LCdr. Lentz struggled to keep the helicopter straight and level, hook-up men beneath the aircraft tried to capture the elusive cable. After several tries, the crew gave up on the RAST for safety reasons. LCdr. Lentz had the flight deck cleared of all personnel and smoothly made a boost-off, free-deck recovery into the trap.

Postflight inspection revealed a leak in the second-stage lateral servo. If the leak had continued, the second-stage primary servos would have been secured to keep the No.2 system from losing all fluid.

**Lt. Brian Niemi  
VFA-305**

During CQ, Lt. Niemi launched from USS *Nimitz* (CVN 68) and began climbing to 600 feet. Passing through 400 feet, the aircraft yawed left. Lt. Niemi heard a loud banging noise and felt engine vibration. Seconds later, his engine voice alert broadcast, "Engine left." The pilot then saw a "flame-out" caution light.

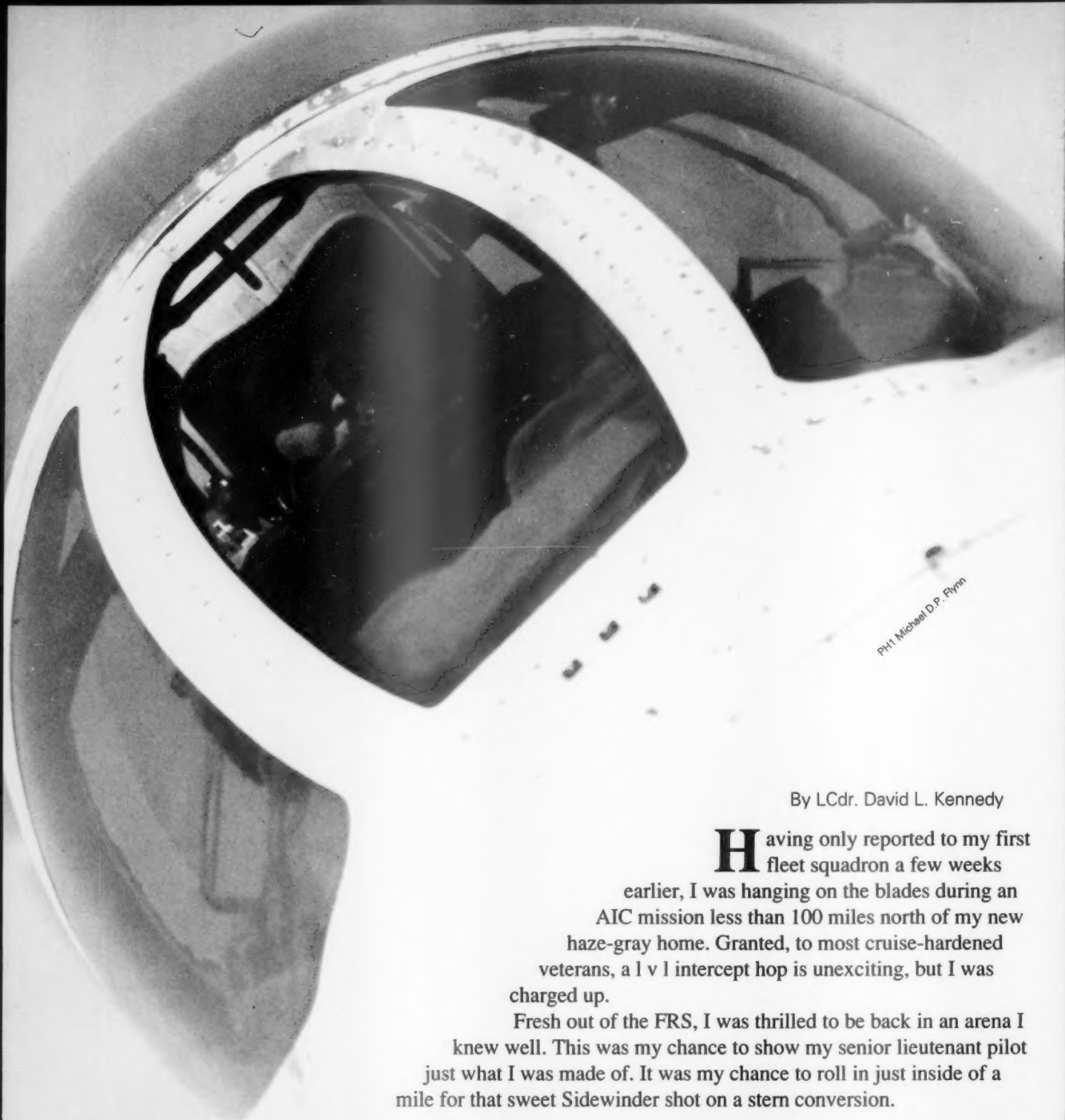
Lt. Niemi confirmed the loss of the left engine by scanning his instruments, while simultaneously selecting military power on both engines. NATOPS did not specifically cover his situation but fell somewhere between settling off the cat and a single-engine approach in the landing configuration. With military power and flaps at half from the catapult launch, the aircraft was already in the appropriate configuration.

Unable to get the Hornet to climb, Lt. Niemi borrowed from settle-off-the-cat procedures and raised the landing gear (gear hydraulics run off the right engine).

Passing 300 feet with a 250-fpm descent, he completed these procedures by using the external-stores jettison to get rid of excess weight and drag from the two external tanks and MERs. Lt. Niemi then coaxed the aircraft away from the water and immediately start his bingo-profile climb for NAS North Island, the primary divert field.

Hold-down fuel for the period was 3,100 pounds and Lt. Niemi started his profile climb with 3,300 pounds. He trapped at North Island with 1,600 pounds.





By LCdr. David L. Kennedy

**H**aving only reported to my first fleet squadron a few weeks earlier, I was hanging on the blades during an AIC mission less than 100 miles north of my new haze-gray home. Granted, to most cruise-hardened veterans, a l v l intercept hop is unexciting, but I was charged up.

Fresh out of the FRS, I was thrilled to be back in an arena I knew well. This was my chance to show my senior lieutenant pilot just what I was made of. It was my chance to roll in just inside of a mile for that sweet Sidewinder shot on a stern conversion.

# Watch This!

Throughout the flight, I was clicking. My tactics were sound, my shots perfectly valid, my comm crisp. I may not have known what the heck "Delta four" meant, but I could nail an intercept. I was trying my hardest to impress this pilot, and evidently, I was doing well enough for him to decide to show me a thing or two.

On our third turn as the bogey, drilling along at the sluggish speed of 210 KIAS, I watched our sister squadron's aircraft track right to the gimbal limits of my AWG-9. Looking outside, I tried to pick him up visually. There he was, approaching the beam. His nose was nearly on us as he rounded the corner, headed for our six o'clock. That was when my pilot uttered the words that will remain forever etched on that part of my brain that is labeled "self preservation."

"Watch this," he snickered.

Rolling the aircraft to our right, he pulled on the stick and made a maneuver that plumb confounded me. There was no way our opponent could follow us through this move. It was awesome. Our nose sliced through the air smartly and we began a rough dive for the deck. I figured that, beginning the move at around 20,000 feet, we'd start back up after losing around 4,000 feet. Then we'd try to pull our nose to the fighter, which was sure to overshoot us on this one.

In less than one second I had gained considerable respect for this pilot, who had just under a 1,000 hours in type. That was when he said, in a very calm and almost respectful tone, "That... was a departure."

Looking back later, it was easy to see exactly what we had done and why we shouldn't have done it. We had made a coordinated control maneuver that ended up not so coordinated. The aircraft had tried to go where my pilot told it to, but failing to hack the turn, yawed violently in the opposite direction and started losing altitude rapidly.

At the moment my pilot called the departure, all the training and concentrated study of NATOPS procedures paid off. Taking a breath to collect myself, I chimed in with the first couple of lines of our upright-departure-spin procedures. My pilot

needed no such prompting, of course, for by the time I was fixating on the altimeter, he was already making corrections and scanning the turn needle.

While our aircraft was falling like a leaf, our sister squadron's crew was screaming on the radio about an F-14 in a spin—us. I think he even tried to call a direction of turn. The fact was that we were not in a spin. We were in that phase that out-of-control instructors call "post-stall gyration." While the errant radio calls terrified the guys back on the ship, my brain filtered them out as I continued to concentrate on the real situation at hand.

As time compression kindly slowed things down, I became a talking altimeter, counting off the thousands of feet. I don't remember asking my pilot if he had control, but at around 14,000 feet he began his pull. Soon we were straight and level at just under 10,000 feet.

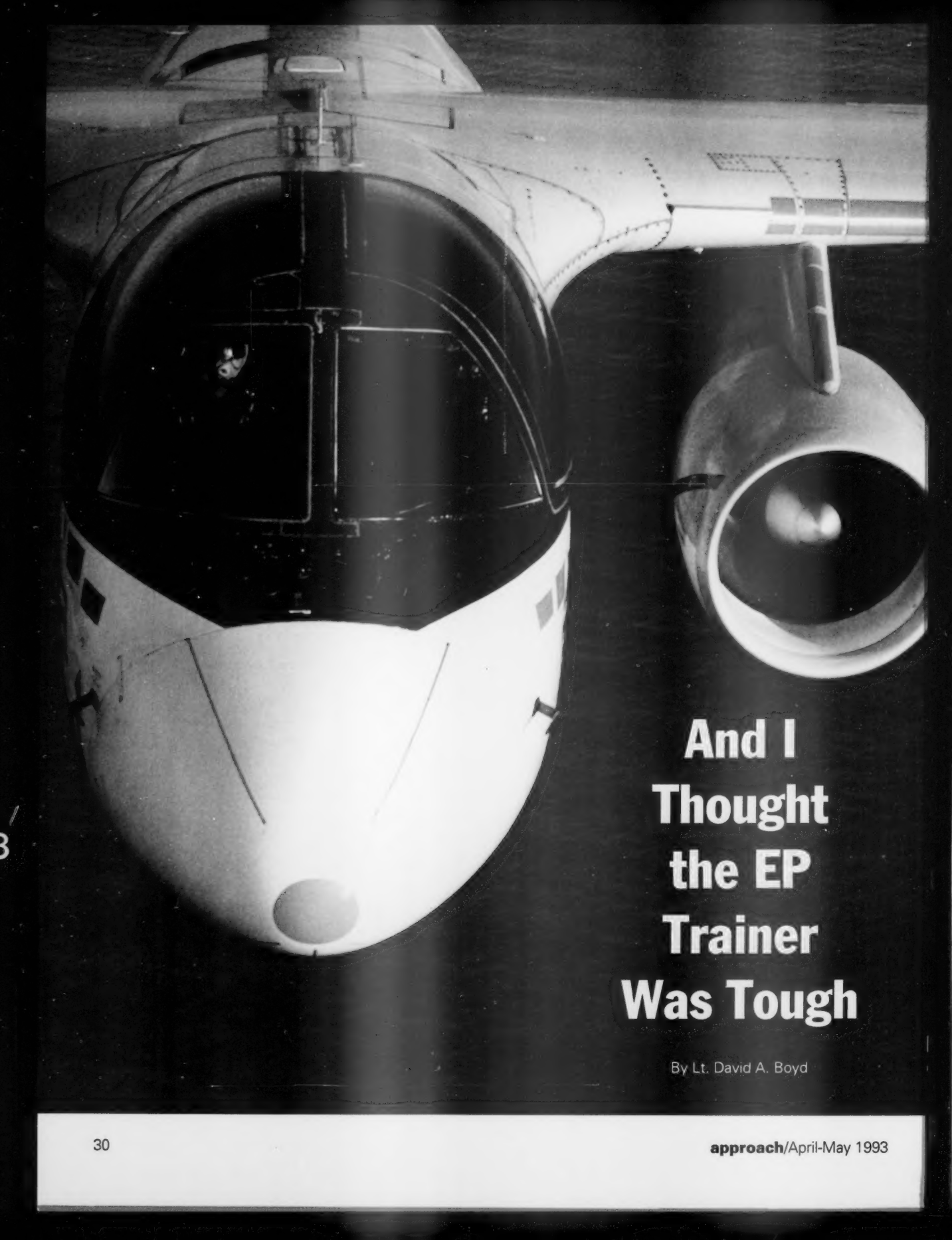
After our trap, we headed into the ready room. That was when the intensity of the whole situation finally caught up with me and I spent a few minutes catching my breath in my chair before the debrief.

Now, back to the mistake we made long before our intercept. In the brief, we had skipped over the topics of departure procedures, vertical recoveries and spin avoidance since we wouldn't be doing any "maneuvering" flight or ACM. Flight leads and mission commanders who have spent the better part of an hour briefing join-ups, tanking procedures and pattern specifics, finally get around to the "training rules." They figure that since the mission isn't ACM, there's no reason to think about departures: "We'll be flying slow, so we won't be in a situation to worry about that."

When are you closest to stalling an aircraft? At 350 KIAS or at max-endurance angle of attack? On a 2.0 flight with no tanking, you're at a fairly high angle of attack and slow speed the entire hop. This is certainly as appropriate a time to think about stalls and spins as when you'll be zorching into the merge with a bite and an altitude advantage. ◀

LCdr. Kennedy is a RIO with VF-21.

There  
was  
no way  
our  
opponent  
could  
follow us  
through  
this  
move.



# And I Thought the EP Trainer Was Tough

By Lt. David A. Boyd



**I**t was the best deal an FRS student could get: a cross-country for a FAM-4. This one was to Atlanta, where each of us had friends. The instructor pilot was well-liked, so the other student and I expected a relaxed atmosphere and an above. We had filled out a DD-175 and received a weather brief, which we brought back to the IP for evaluation.

After hearing our synopsis of the weather, the IP did not like what he saw: thunderstorms across the southeast. While accompanying us back to base ops, he decided to file for Memphis, where we could find out whether it was safe to proceed to "Hotlanta." During the long and thorough brief, which gave us a chance to savor our take-out lunches, we noted that there was a slight chance of thunderstorms over the mountains in the southwest.

After takeoff, the IP asked me his favorite FAM-4 questions so that we could get the "X" before entering the thunderstorm-infested southeast.

As we climbed to flight level 290, we acknowledged that NATOPS suggested attaching oxygen masks above flight level 270. Since they were uncomfortable, we elected not to wear them.

This hop was really easy. As we flew over Albuquerque, I observed that I had recently been there. The IP showed me how to use the radar for weather avoidance, even though that was not on the syllabus. I activated the radar in 64 NM scale, saw nothing significant, then turned it off to avoid using all of the freon before we really needed it.

Just before entering a cloud layer, we saw a flight of three B-52s travelling in the opposite direction just below our altitude, so we assumed the path ahead must be relatively clear. Soon, however, frost began building on the wings and we turned on the engine anti-ice and wing de-ice. After a few minutes, the IP asked me to shine the radar again. Before I had a chance to examine the returns, we broke out of the cloud and saw the anvil-shaped clouds of a thunderstorm staring us in the face.

The IP immediately began a right turn and I called Center. Before 40 degrees of turn, the rains came. By 70 degrees of turn, golf-ball sized hail began pelting the aircraft. I noticed a crack in my windscreen and began doing the emergency procedures. I made it through the first two steps: visor down and oxygen on. The IP reminded me to let Center know that we were descending. As I tried to reach them, the pilot's side canopy exploded. Every chart, newspaper, and half-eaten bag of M&Ms in the cockpit escaped through the new T-top mod.

I was holding my mask to my face and urging the IP to do the same until he showed me what remained of his

oxygen hose, most of which had joined the M&Ms as an early Christmas gift for some young mountain lion. He reminded me once more to let Center know what we were doing.

Then, I noticed the IP's head was bobbing. I was sure he wasn't bored, so I assumed hypoxia was setting in. Soon he slumped over with the aircraft in a 75-90 degree angle of bank and 45 degrees nose down. Our rate of descent was about 18,000 fpm.

I grabbed the stick and took control, rolled wings level, and began following the procedures for the next EP: emergency descent. I love to fly and was working on my private license, but I prefer to fly familiar maneuvers and this was definitely not familiar. Nevertheless, I saw the throttle already at idle, gritted my teeth, and extended the speed brakes. Being unfamiliar with the mountain terrain, I decided to continue the descent until 11,000 feet MSL. Passing 12,500 feet, the IP regained consciousness and took control. I finally pried open my mouth to yell to him that the speed brakes were out, but he couldn't hear me. Fortunately, the backseaters did hear me and stopped their 3-count for simultaneous ejection since the TACCO, an NFO instructor, had seen the pilot slumped over.

I felt the aircraft slow and began to retract the speed brakes. The IP signalled once again that he was in control. At 1,200 feet AGL, we levelled the aircraft. The IP asked where we were, a question which had up to that point in my career been simply a device for student humiliation. I pointed to our position and then to Albuquerque on a chart that had been in my pocket. Via hand signals, I advised the other student that the IP had no mask. After the backseaters discussed the situation for almost two seconds, I was struck with an oxygen mask, which the TACCO allowed me to present as a gift to the IP.

We squawked emergency, and used inertial navigation to find the 13,000 foot runway, a pretty sight, but only for me. The left windscreen was cracked in a spider web pattern and the IP had to stick his head out the new window to his left to see the runway.

Hypoxia sets in much faster after an explosive decompression than it does in the pressure chamber in Pensacola, where you become hypoxic by taking off a mask of 100-percent oxygen. Of course, the author of the oxygen section of NATOPS must have already known this.

The unusual-attitude recoveries that the IP made me do on my FAM-1 flight paid him big dividends; so did the after-hours trainer time I spent "just for fun."

Had I remained silent two extra seconds, there would have been two needless ejections and a greater chance of getting hurt.

Lt. Boyd flies with VS-30.

# LETTERS

## Re: Our Aviators and Controllers issue (January '93)

*Mercer County Airport, West Trenton, NJ* – Kindly accept a few comments from a guy with "Army" stenciled on his tailboom.

Your editorial needs a little research.

There are indeed regulations (civil and military) that "override the controllers' authority." FAR 91.3 takes precedence over all the other FARs; that's straight from the FAA's home office.

AR 95-1, para 4-6a (which applies to us sage-greenies) reiterates that the "pilot in command...is the final authority" for safe operation of the aircraft. There's probably a similar statement in NATOPS and Air Force regs.

Sure, the controller has the "big screen TV," but the aviator has direct-viewing capability unfiltered by anything but plexiglass.

If the controller's using new stuff, all he sees is transponder squawks. If there are a lot of 1200/1277 squawks out there, the controller can (and does) "discontinue monitoring" VFR traffic, which is bureaucratese for "Let's erase all those 1200s cluttering up the scope." That means that the controller doesn't see the student pilot in the Cessna who just launched from the uncontrolled satellite airport at my two o'clock, or "Jetchopper Six" circling the accident on the interstate – at my altitude – and he sure doesn't see the ultralight warrior who's decided to play chicken with a Cobra.

When the controller says the magic words, "Radar contact," he is not relieving the pilot of his see-and-avoid responsibilities. I'll follow controllers' instructions, but you can bet that I'll deviate to avoid traffic – or maintain cloud clearance if I'm VFR – and I'll tell the controller *why* I'm deviating as I'm deviating.

Getting a good dialogue going in *Approach* is a good start. Perhaps if people

start talking to each other in print, they'll be a little less reluctant to talk with each other over the airwaves.

CW4 Aviation William S. Tuttle  
AASF No.1, NJANG

*As I said in the editorial, FAR 91.3 only takes precedence in an emergency.*

*OPNAVINST 3710.7N says that all Naval aircraft shall be operated in accordance with FAR Part 91, except where this instruction provides more stringent requirements.*

*There is no doubt that flight safety is the sole responsibility of the aircraft commander. At the same time, the pilot-in-command cannot override a controller without telling the controller that he is deviating and why. Obviously, in the event of imminent danger, the pilot should deviate first, then report. – Ed.*

## Re: "Who's Trying to Kill Whom?"

*USS Essex (LHD-2)* – I have generally found ATC controllers to be professional and safety conscious. I have also found that the people at the Naval Safety Center to be concerned about safety (hence the name). I also found it curious that an air traffic controller who works at the Safety Center "will not lose sleep when an aviator...ends up in a smoking hole." ACCM Foster's adversarial "it's not my fault" attitude does little to enhance aviation safety and lower the mishap rate.

Current safety doctrine is that the "cost of doing business" method of explaining the mishap rate is unacceptable. Yet ACCM Foster tries to explain away three Class A mishaps (with controllers as causal factors) as "hardly a major hazard." Would we be willing to write off three pilot-error mishaps as "hardly a major hazard"? I doubt it. I

wonder if the families of the aircrew who were killed see air-traffic-controller error as a major hazard.

In another part of his article, ACCM Foster wants to take his ball and go home because pilots won't blindly follow all ATC direction in the ATA. I think he needs to read OPNAV 3710.7N, para 331, which states that the pilot in command is responsible for the safety of his flight.

Yes, pilots have to trust many people to complete their mission, but people are fallible, and a healthy dose of suspicion and skepticism goes a long way to ensure survival.

Lt. Matt Toombs

*NAWC, NAS Patuxent River* – After the "Us versus the Tower" articles, a couple of thoughts came to mind. We in naval aviation tend to be a little weak when it comes to our knowledge of FAA rules. This discrepancy seems to be at the root of the problems described in the stories.

My experience is that ATC works very hard to be standardized. English is not a very precise language, so the words must be carefully selected and understood, especially when working in our busy airspace in the U.S. This care is absolutely essential in foreign airspace because foreign controllers will have no idea what you are asking for if you lay some slang on them.

ACCM Foster describes several instances where the controller knew exactly what he wanted but the message did not "decode" at the other end.

Here is where a better understanding of ATC terminology will help prevent such problems. The controller also has to realize that for whatever reason, "requesting an amended clearance" is not going to be high on a pilot's list when his windscreen is full of another airplane!

**approach**/April-May 1993

Regardless of who caused the conflict, it takes positive action on both sides to reach a safe conclusion. The pilot still has the ultimate responsibility for the safe and orderly conduct of his flight. Pilots also have to make sure that they understand all ATC terminology.

In my 23 years as a naval aviator, and now five years as a civilian contractor pilot, I have found that a visit to your local ATC facility reaps dividends for everyone. If you have the chance to "fly a controller," it can be a real eye opener for him to see things from the other end of the mike. I know this might not be practical in two-seat kerosene converters, but we in the multi-motor, multiseat community do have this ability.

Greater emphasis on the FARs and ATC terms should start at Pensacola and the training command as well.

Cdr. Tom Clarke, USN (Ret)  
Air Department

**NAS Norfolk** — It was a bit discouraging to have my article appear in *Approach* right after a rebuttal that I had not read nor had the chance to comment on. This kind of set-up doesn't allow for much constructive criticism, and will likely discourage some would-be contributors from sending in their articles.

"Traffic in the Groove" was a fair and accurate presentation of events. The incident did not fit the parameters outlined by OPNAVINST 3750.6Q for a NMAC Hazard Report. I did not blame the controller; I outlined each factor that contributed to the situation so that another pilot might avoid a similar problem. After all, that is the purpose of *Approach*, isn't it? To provide a forum for naval aviation to share lessons and prevent a mishap from happening again?

It is unfortunate that you thought my article blamed the controller. That was certainly not my intention. Conflicts between pilots and ATC will occasionally develop, but often, many factors contribute to NMACs. It's regrettable that in many instances, there is an adversarial relationship between the pilots and controllers. But the real tragedy is that some controllers "will not lose sleep when an aviator...ends up in a smoking hole because he violated ATC."

When a controller loses concern for aviators, we are all in trouble.

Lt. R.C. Belesimo  
VR-56

*ATCM Foster's article was not a rebuttal to Lt. Belesimo's story. His article used examples from several stories to point out miscommunications between pilots and controllers. — Ed.*

Once again, we need to remind readers about how to submit a BZ nomination. Please make sure that the writeup goes through the squadron CO, then to the wing, MAG or admin wing. In the case of helo dets, the ship's CO needs to chop the writeup. The signature of a squadron public affairs officer or safety officer will not suffice.

The nominating squadron should send the writeup, chop and a good 5x7 or 8x10 photograph to the Editor. Color photos are fine, but they will be published in black and white. Avoid polaroids.

Finally, for you folks who actually submit the BZ packages, please make sure that the nominee(s) first name(s) or initials are included, as well as their positions in the crew, e.g. (crew chief) or (SENSO). A contact DSN (AV) number should also be in the cover letter.

## Vulture's Row

Oct. 1, 1992 — An **F/A-18B** from NATC Patuxent River crashed after waveoff on final approach, killing a civilian motorist. The crew ejected.

Oct. 13 — An **HH-1N** from Antarctic Development Squadron 6 crashed during a whiteout on a VMC return flight, killing the crew chief and two passengers.

Oct. 16 — During an ACM engagement near Key West, FL, an **F-14A** from VF-302 departed controlled flight. The crew ejected.

Oct. 20 — A **CH-46E** from HMM-262 landed at night at MCAS Futenma, Okinawa, rolled over while taxiing, and was destroyed.

Oct. 28 — An **A-4** from Navy Fighter Weapons School departed controlled flight during a simulated strike mission and crashed near Yuma, AZ. The pilot ejected.

Nov. 1 — An **F/A-18D** from VMFA(AW)-225 ran off the end of the runway during an aborted takeoff at 29 Palms, CA. The crew ejected.

Nov. 3 — An **EA-6B** from VAQ-129 crashed on takeoff at NAF El Centro, killing three crewmembers.

Nov. 4 — During shipboard ops in the eastern Atlantic, a **CH-53E** from HMM-261 crashed into the water at night. Five fatalities.

Nov. 8 — During day vertrep, a **CH-46D** from HC-11 had total failure of the aft transmission. The aircraft ditched at sea. The crew was recovered.

Nov. 22 — An **F/A-18** from VFA-97 crashed after a night cat shot aboard USS *Kittyhawk*. The pilot ejected.

Nov. 25 — During a single-engine approach at NAS Kingsville, a student pilot in a **T-2C** from VT-23 ejected when the second engine failed.

Dec. 9 — An **AV-8B** from VMA-214 flamed out at altitude near MCA Yuma. The pilot ejected.

Dec. 15 — An **F-14A** from VF-33 departed controlled flight during an ACM mission on off the North Carolina coast. Both crew members ejected.

Dec. 17 — An **F-16N** from VF-126 disappeared from Salt Lake Center radar and crashed near Twin Falls, Idaho. The pilot was killed.

Dec. 22 — The nose-strut cylinder on an **LC-130F** from VXE-8 snapped on landing, causing loss of the nose gear.

Dec. 23 — An **F-14A** from VF-201 departed controlled flight during an ACM engagement with an A-4. The RIO was killed.

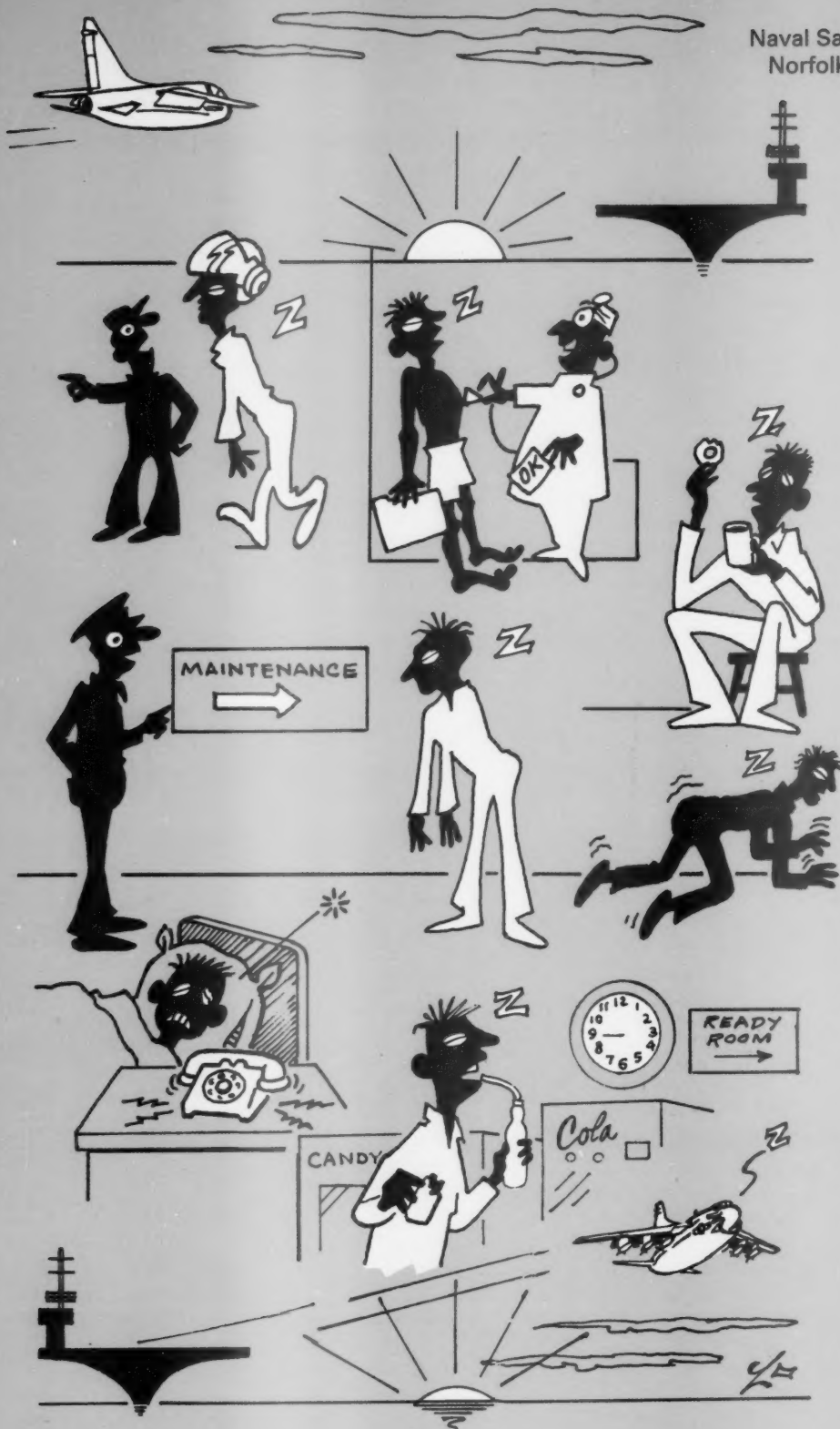
Jan. 18, 1993 — An **F-14** from VF-101 was on an FRS ACM syllabus flight at Key West, FL. The aircraft entered a post-stall gyration, nose-low spiral (not a spin). Aircrew ejected.

Jan. 25 — An **F-14A** from VF-24 was on its first pass in the FCLP pattern. NFO command ejected aircrew as the aircraft rolled through 60 degrees, left wing down. The aircraft crashed in a landfill near NAS Miramar.

Feb. 13 — A **CH-53D** from HMH-363 crashed at Baledogle Marine Expeditionary Airfield, Somalia, while training on unaided external lifts. No fatalities; helo was destroyed.

(Operational Class A Mishaps as of Mar. 1, 1993)

Naval Safety Center  
Norfolk, Virginia



**Crew Rest:** *Don't leave home without it!*



